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AMA-MX

Surveying all he sees...

Chad Reed is notching numbers in the 30s and 40s when it comes to years and victories and the Australian admitted that his success at Anaheim 2 – on a night when Supercross dressed up in celebration of its heritage – was one of his most emotional. What more to come from the ex-champ as the series rolls up to Oakland this week?

Photo by Simon Cudby







MX

Leaving in the dust...

Nearly 9000km through three countries and a mountain of hours in the saddle at full pelt. The facts sometimes get lost among the many adjectives when it comes to the Dakar but the rally is never anything less than gnarly. Marc Coma maintained KTM's vice-grip on the annual madness with the new factory 450

Photo by Maragni/KTM images







Delicate drift...

For an example of the kind of balance, poise and control that helps take MotoGP Grand Prix wins then check out Marc Marquez's style against Brad Baker at his recent Superprestigio dirt-track event in Barcelona. The American would win but '93' only gained more fans for his display in the round

Photo by JP Acevedo www.mx1onboard.com



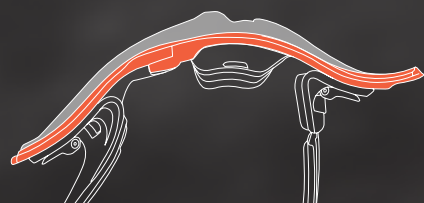
MotoGP





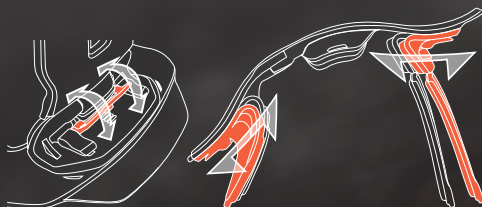
FIVE . FIVE

NECK BRACE



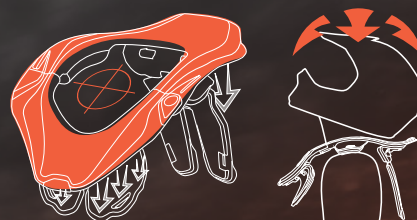
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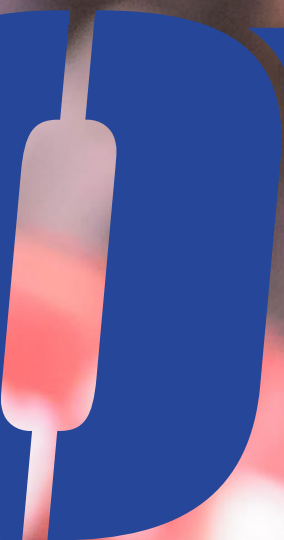
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JEFFREY HERLINGS





AMA-SX

LOS ANGELES

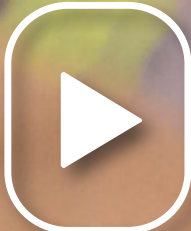
ANAHEIM 2 · JANUARY 18th · Rnd 3 of 17

450SX winner: Chad Reed, Kawasaki

250SX West Coast winner: Cole Seely, Honda

RETRO REED

By Steve Matthes www.pulpmx.com, photos by Simon Cudby @cudby



PLAY

Three rounds down in the 2014 Monster Energy Supercross series and it's shaping up to be a good battle. Three different winners, not a single rider has made the podium at every race and a rookie holds the points lead.

It was expected that Monster Energy Kawasaki's Ryan Villopoto would win his fair share and certainly his tenth-to-first success at Phoenix for round two was impressive. The other two races have seen Villopoto commit errors while in first (Anaheim 1) or going for first (Anaheim 2) that have held him back. Nothing much to worry about if you're a fan of his...RV still looks great.

The big story was Team Two-Two's Chad Reed winning a thrilling Anaheim 2 battle with Yoshimura Suzuki's James Stewart. The veterans really embraced the night's retro theme and diced it out like it was 2009 again. Reed's win was certainly a popular one and unlikely at that. Once again, maybe a lot of us have written the old guy off a little too soon.

"I just want to put myself in a position to win races and challenge for the title. Like I said, I feel like we've done a rewind to '12 and I have that feeling again. So I just want to progress from this, learn from it, know what we did, and just move forward," said Reed after his most unexpected win. "Be there week-in and week-out and have a shot at it in Vegas. Honestly 41 [other] wins, a lot of those came easy, on little sleep. This one just came with so much hard work. I just worked my ass off this off-season, as did the team. It just seemed like it was a hard-earned win. So it was an emotional one."

And of course, there's the Anaheim 1 winner Ken Roczen who holds the red plate after three rounds and although we knew he would be good, he's still surprising a lot of people with this start to 2014. The German has some serious skills indoors and out and shades of Jeremy McGrath in 1993, a rookie is shocking the supecross world.

In the end, this season is shaping up nicely with a mix of youth and age and if nothing else, old man Reed is still showing us that he's truly a special racer.

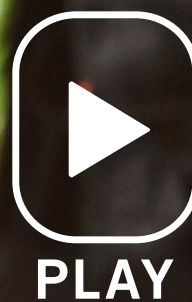




ANAHEIM 2



PLAY



Seely and Anderson continue their duel while Wilson's luck sticks at a low ebb. Osborne (16) was also a victim of the Scotsman's tumble with a tuff block





Over in the 250s there are just two names to tell you about. Troy Lee Designs Cole Seely and Rockstar KTM's Jason Anderson have dominated this series through the three races so far. Anderson won the first two with thrilling last lap passes on Seely and at the third race Seely rode a perfect 15 laps to win over, of course, Anderson. Afterwards the latter was dropped two spots for jumping on a red crossed flag, which dumped him to fourth and gave Seely the points lead by one.



"We're both top notch right now. Both of us are going so fast, so any little mistake from either one of us is huge for the other guy. Anaheim 1, he got lucky with the lappers," said Seely after Anaheim 2. "In Phoenix, I made a stupid mistake in the sand. I think it says a lot. We're running really fast lap times and we're gapping those guys really big. We're both hauling out there."

Those two have been a lot better than Pro Circuit's Dean Wilson and GEICO Honda's Zach Osborne so far and that's been a bit of a surprise. Stay tuned to see if these two battle it out all the way to the end.





A curious and aggressive outing from Dungey (the guy cannot win over opinion either way it seems) resulted in a crash that ruined any chance of victory. Barcia (right) also went down and dirtied that fantastic retro Honda livery



PLAY



PLAY

The McGrath nac-nac reappears to popular response. Cooper Webb managed his first podium in just his third 250SX outing. KTM's Pit Beirer (right) was in the USA and a keen observer





THE COX VIEW...

By Steve Cox



Three weeks ago, who was talking about Justin Brayton? Nobody. But then again, this is normal for Justin Brayton. The JGR/Toyota Yamaha rider has always flown under the radar. He's not flashy. He doesn't have any hype behind him whatsoever. But here he is after three rounds, just five points adrift of the championship lead.

Every single racer at the top level has the potential to compete for race wins and championships. Usually, they're missing only one or two minor (but necessary) ingredients. It could be bike setup, nagging injuries or illnesses, or something as simple as their mindset. And then there are a few guys who have all of the pieces of the puzzle, but just have a hard time putting it together.

Anthropologist and humanist author Ashley Montagu obviously wasn't thinking of AMA Supercross when he said the following, but it fits nonetheless: "The deepest personal defeat suffered by human beings is constituted by the difference between what one was capable of becoming and what one has in fact become."

This year, Brayton has started to realize his potential. Instead of being a potential front-runner, he is a front-runner. Although it is a surprise to many, it's not an accident.

To start with, there's the 2014 Yamaha YZ450F. It's no secret that a lot of top racers were having trouble adjusting to the previous YZ450F incarnation. Early in the off-season following the 2013 AMA National MX Series, there was buzz that Brayton and Josh Grant had both tried the 2014 bike and thought it was as good as their 2013 race bikes. That's saying quite a lot, because stock motocross bikes are simply the starting point for factory race teams, and the Yamaha guys apparently had a starting point that was equal to their finished race bike in previous years.

It also helps that Yamaha has been more directly involved with the JGR/Toyota Yamaha race program prior to the 2014 season.

The next big change for Brayton is that he hired Nathan Ramsey as his riding coach for 2014. Ramsey is a very smart guy with a similar career path to Brayton, which is a big help.

Also, Brayton will be 30 years old in a couple of months. He's married and he has a kid on the way. In the old days, these would be indicators of a racer on his way out. But for Brayton, it seems as if these changes in his personal life have calmed him down and focused him on the task at hand.

Probably the best evidence for Brayton's new-found focus actually came at Anaheim 2, when he rode a throwback yellow-and-black YZ450F all day. It's curious because the last time Brayton steered a Yamaha that wasn't blue was at the Monster Energy Cup in 2012. His YZ was white, and he asked his team to return it to blue because he felt the white front fender might distract him on the track. He had no such concerns at Anaheim 2.

This is probably just the tip of the iceberg as far as Brayton's emergence as a consistent front-runner is concerned, but the sum of the parts is the difference between finishing near the tail of the top 10 last year, and this year taking the race to defending champ Ryan Villopoto two races in a row – first in the Phoenix main event, and again in their heat race at Anaheim 2, which Brayton won after losing the lead momentarily to Villopoto.

I have a feeling it's only a matter of time before Justin Brayton gets his first win. And if/when he does, the sky's the limit.





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Style, fitness, potential and youth; there is not a lot missing for Ken Roczen to open a new era of speed and achievement in Supercross circles. The '94' will be red going to Oakland





AMA-SX CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

AMA 450SX RESULT

Riders

1	Chad Reed, AUS	Kawasaki
2	James Stewart, USA	Suzuki
3	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM
4	Justin Brayton, USA	Yamaha
5	Ryan Villopoto, USA	Kawasaki

AMA 250SX WEST RESULT

Riders

1	Cole Seely, USA	Honda
2	Cooper Webb, USA	Yamaha
3	Malcolm Stewart, USA	Honda
4	Jason Anderson, USA	KTM
5	Justin Hill, USA	Kawasaki

AMA 450SX STANDINGS (AFTER 3 OF 17 ROUNDS)

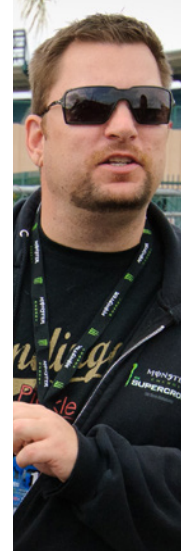
Riders	Points
1 Ken Roczen	60
2 Ryan Villopoto	59
3 Chad Reed	57
4 Ryan Dungey	57
5 Justin Brayton	55

AMA 250SX WEST STANDINGS (AFTER 3 OF 9 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jason Anderson	72
2 Cole Seely	69
3 Zach Osborne	53
4 Cooper Webb	51
5 Dean Wilson	50

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THE BOUNCEBACK EFFECT...

By Steve Matthes

It's good to be Chad Reed. The wily old 'vet' won his 43rd career supercross race and just like the last few ones, it was a most unexpected win. Seriously, this guy is like Jason Voorhees from Friday the 13th fame - you cannot ever count him out. He will rise up!

No matter what he does the rest of the year, 2014 has now been a success for Reed and his team. Once again betting on himself, he switched to Kawasaki's after a miserable 2013 and got to work. And in the season's third race, one that appropriately enough had a retro theme, Reed caught and passed James Stewart (what is more retro than these two old rivals going at it for the win?) late in the race to take a well earned victory.

Yes, Ryan Villopoto and Ryan Dungey both looked to have A2 in the bag but those riders made mistakes. Reed did not. In fact, on the sixth lap it was Reed, at that point 4th, who had the fastest lap-time of the night and had caught the lead pack. From there he got better and better by using a triple onto a tabletop section to gain time on everyone before making a somewhat surprising move on Stewart.

And with that Reed moved to third in the series standings, just three points away from the lead and the heavy crowd favorite from here on out. It was a popular triumph for many in the pits as well. Reed has assumed the 'old guy' mantle from Kevin Windham (although Nick Wey is actually the oldest rider in most main events) and people have bonded with him and his family as they try and keep creating something out of really what was necessity.

Remember, Reed started Two-Two Motorsports when he wasn't able to get the factory Honda spot in 2010 and there's no doubt that he, nor anyone else, knew how successful the move would be from a PR standpoint. Reed has become the most popular rider in the series, hands down.

“Reed has become the most popular rider in the series, hands down...”

With a deep field, it was thought that Reed would struggle to podium and perhaps his winning days were behind him. After all, even though he didn't have a bad a 2013 supercross series as a lot of people thought (his terrible 2013 motocross term somewhat clouded his supercross results) he only made two podiums all season long. He has matched that total in just three events this year.

Last year many of his problems were put on the Honda and for sure some of being unable to gel with the bike is to blame but Reed came into '13 admittedly out of shape after his 2012 season was ended early with a catastrophic knee injury. Reed got back on the horse, whipped his body into the shape and got on a bike that he likes. A happy Chad Reed is a fast Chad Reed: I think we're seeing that now. Again.



AT THE **FOU** STROKE

HUSQVARNA IN MXGP (BY THOSE AT THE SHARP END)

BIRTH

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by JP Acevedo www.mx1onboard.comw

A 111 year old brand starts a fourth significant chapter of racing life in 2014. Husqvarna have moved heart-and-soul from north to southern to central Europe and now rest nicely next to KTM near the Austrian-German border. Yes, the marque will present (surprisingly) in Moto3, Enduro and will also have an vibrant

team in MX2 but it is their participation in the MXGP FIM Motocross World Championship – the premier class with the 450 and 350 FC motorcycles – that involves some exciting questions for the eighteen round campaign now just five weeks away and with other six factories also ready for the gate.

THE FACTS

The MXGP effort is handled by former KTM outfit IceOne. The Finnish team is headed by ex-GP racer Antti Pyrhonen and field 28 year old South African and 2008 MX2 World Champion Tyla Rattray (back in the FIM series after five years of AMA competition) as well as 23 year old Australian rookie Todd Waters. Renowned as the squad owned and formed by motocross fan F1 driver Kimi Raikkonen, IceOne is a relatively new set-up with less than five years of Grand Prix experience but have

nevertheless established a reputation for being well-funded and hard-working. Rattray is the second and only other rider of a factory 350cc four-stroke in MXGP accompanying five times reigning champ Red Bull KTM's Tony Cairoli (on the 350SX-F) against the 450s. Waters takes 100cc more but the opening round of the GP term – at Losail in Qatar on March 1st – will be only his third major race on European soil after two Motocross of Nations appearances for his country.

THE QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES FACTORY MEAN FOR ICEONE?

“Husqvarna certainly gives us great support and advantage,” reveals Pyrhonen. “We get even better parts on the bike and there are people in Austria developing components for our riders. In technical ways we have gone forward and of course in a support and budget way also.”

The 35 year old Finn grabbed three top five finishes in four years of MX3 world championship racing and was also a regular in MX1 up until 2008. He now approaches his second season as head of IceOne.

“With Kimi we share a passion for motocross but also the same way to work and the mentality towards the team,” he says. “We are not here just to take part. We want to make the team function on a maximum professional level; that’s our goal. Making the move to factory status was a huge leap and helps us again to make the next step. We are now at the level where we need to start making results on the

track. One year ago we made the decision to push the team into the top ten and we did it. Now we are ready for the next step and the podium.”

The KTM link means not only a technical basis of excellence and proven success but also entry and affiliation to a sporting empire that has tasted spoils in everything from MotoGP to Dakar.

“I understand how big this is and I channel it to each person in our crew,” Antti continues. “We are a factory team but, really, that doesn’t bring us anywhere. We need to focus and commit to our work day-after-day. The factory status doesn’t really change anything; you still need that system. In a way we are not really ‘there yet’. The ‘factory team’ label gives us the good cards to get where we want.”

IceOne has progressed from being the team that gave Dean Ferris his first full GP contract



(ill-fatedly as the Australian would get injured) in 2012 to the platform for experienced ex-works racers Rui Goncalves and Xavier Boog in 2013, where the injury curse struck again. Their move under the Pierer Group and Husqvarna umbrella means another nudge up the curve with the high profile Rattray and exciting prospect of Waters...even if both are untried in the premier category. "Step-by-step we have looked at better riders and now we are in a

position where we can attract the top guys," affirms Pyrhonen. "You need to be a factory team to do that. We are getting into that place where world champions will ride for us. We are definitely lucky that KTM bought Husqvarna but on the other side we did a good job to be able to earn that trust so they would give us this project. So far it is a good match and we were in the right place at the right time."

10

FEATURE

HUSQVARNA IN MXGP





AN RATTRAY STILL BE A GP WINNING THREAT?

Tyla Rattray cut his teeth in Grand Prix. Whether he was steering a 125cc two-stroke against the four-stroke revolution (as 2004 MX2 runner-up), dealing with injury and dashed hopes as title favourite (knee ligaments 2005) or beating some of the best and brightest prospects to come out of the scene in the last decade (Caroli, Searle, Pourcel in '06, '07, '08).

The South African grabbed the elusive MX2 crown in 2008 and embarked on a five year association with the fabled Pro Circuit team as well as trainer Aldon Baker in America where he learnt and sampled highlights both outdoors and in. His return across the Atlantic has been prompted by machinery and the Husky opportunity. "I'm 28 now and didn't want to be racing a 250 anymore," the father of two admitted. "I wanted to be in the premier class for a couple more years. I got a great deal from Husky with Pit [Beirer, KTM Motorsport Director], Antti and everyone putting it together. I've had a good off-season and I'm staying with Aldon because I believe that he is the best guy in the business when it comes to fitness, especially for motorcycle racing. We have a good programme. I feel good on the bike and I think when we get to Qatar we will only know then what more we need to work on."

Rattray has split opinion with whomever you speak to about MXGP. Some believe he can slot straight back into the front pack thanks to his experience, conditioning and fresh synergy with the 350FC. Others will claim that '28' is in for a shock as to the speed and capabilities of the upper echelons of the class. "The last time I raced in Europe was the Motocross of Nations in 2011. Since then I haven't raced against anyone from over here. So I need to see where we are at!" Rattray admits before then offering some more analysis. "I've watched some of the races. In my opinion – hands-down – Villopoto

is the fastest guy in the world and outdoors he'd beat Cairoli. If they are both 1-2 out of the gate then for sure Villopoto will win because his outright speed is ridiculous. Dungey, Stewart, Barcia, Canard...there are so many good guys in America that if you get a tenth place start then it is hard to come through the pack."

"Whereas here I feel that those front five guys are pretty good but then that drop is big. The depth is different compared to America. For me, I have been doing the motos and I feel good on the bike. The 350 is amazing to ride. If I can get out of the gate....my plan is to be there and race Cairoli like I was doing in 2008. We'll see what we've got. I learned a lot racing in America and my fitness is probably the best it has been in my career."

Pyrhonen recognises the value that a 'name' like Rattray brings to the team and also the curiosity factor of hoisting two of the southern hemisphere's only athletes in MXGP to the fore: "As an MXGP fan I think it is great to have more nationalities. Someone like Tyla is a perfect match for our team; a former world champion that is not too old and has experience of Grand Prix."

The fact that Rattray has stitched together a championship-winning season is a considerable asset. Especially as there is nobody else in the current MXGP collective to have achieved that against Cairoli. "Winning any championship is not easy, it doesn't matter what it is," he explains. "A lot of hard work goes into it; a title isn't won by sitting on the couch doing nothing. People think that some riders are lucky to win championships and it is never about that because you always really need to work for it. You have to stay off the ground, you cannot get hurt, you can't have mechanical problems: there is a whole momentum

that needs to be going in the same direction. At the end of the day you need to have a solid structure around you and that is why Cairoli has been so successful. He is fit, puts the work in and the whole thing around him is like a machine. He is 'there' every round. If he doesn't win then he takes that second or third and always works towards the big picture, and I was the same in 2008. I was bummed that I didn't win on a weekend but after some races you can see the ball is rolling. Once that happens you know that you need to put sixteen or seventeen rounds together and keep in good shape."

Rattray might be an old-hand at Grands Prix but the evolution of the FIM series since he departed means that ten of the eighteen rounds will still be untouched ground for him:

"I've never been to Thailand, Brazil or Mexico, so that will be new and I'm definitely looking forward to those."

When we visit the Red Bull IceOne Husqvarna racing team at tests in Spain Pyrhonen is clearly enthused to see Rattray gunning the 350 and working closely with the WP suspension team. He is keeping his feet on the ground however when it comes to public admonishments of his riders' possibilities.

"It [MXGP] is a packed field and there is definitely a group or two of different riders," he believes. "There are those that can go for the GPs wins and then there are six or seven who are battling for a podium; that second one is a strong and wide group. I definitely believe and hope we can be a part of that one and go from there."





WHAT WILL WATERS OFFER AND CAN HE FILL THE AUSTRALIAN VOID THAT DEAN FERRIS HAS LEFT?

Pyrhonen: "Todd is young, he's fast and has a strong working ethic. He is also a smart fit for our project." The Aussie is a mystery to European race fans...as much as Grand Prix will be a journey of fast discovery for the powerful former national series runner-up. "It is all new," he naturally admits. "We do a lot by ourselves in Australia. I go riding by myself and I choose if I will train or ride or whatever. There are more people over here, like training mechanics and a whole bigger scene. These are new competitors and I'm not used to racing with these guys. I need to just get in there, do some pre-season races and see where I can be."

Dean Ferris was set to fly the flag for the Aussies in MXGP, which would have removed some of the spotlight and although 2013 Australian

250 champion Luke Styke is another rookie in MX2 in '14, Waters will still have to slot quickly into the expectations of being a works rider at a higher level. "It is always nice to have someone there but Dean and I are the same age and we've raced bar-to-bar since we were 12-13 years old. I'm pumped that he got himself a decent deal in America and that it's the direction he wants to go in."

"You know, for us it was difficult to come to Europe," Waters continues. "For one thing it's on the other side of the world and for another Australia had 'fallen off the map' a little bit in terms of respect or just even making contact to speak to a team manager over here to get a ride. Dean opened that up for us. He managed to get through and get a place. That widened



the door and made people look again at Australian talent. A lot of our racing is influenced by America and what I like about coming here is that it is more 'new'. You hear a lot about Chad, Stewart and Ryan Villopoto but not so much about Antonio Cairoli and the GP riders. When I first came over some of the guys said 'there's so-and-so' and I said 'who's that?' and they couldn't believe that I didn't know one of the other factory riders! Anyway it is good for Australia that we have guys over here now and people like MotoOnline want to follow us and this championship."

Unlike his team-mate Waters prefers the grunt and performance of the 450 and is also wise to the demands of a six month season having battled Josh Coppins for the 2012 national crown. "I enjoy the 450," he says. "Tyla is coming from America and he has done a lot of riding on the 250F. I stepped up on the 450 when I was eighteen and rode for Honda. I haven't touched a 250 since then. I like the big bike and the fact is that everybody apart from Tyla and Cairoli are on the 450s. It is not like the whole field is on a 350!"

"I just want to make the full championship. It is such a long season and a lot of people get injured and drop out, so my main focus is to be there at the end and get the experience that I need," he adds.

If there are past lessons to be learned about Australians and their neighbouring Kiwis in MXGP then there are strands of relentless determination to be found in cases like Reed, McFarlane, Ferris, Townley and Coppins. From early indications it appears Waters will easily slip into that elite. If he can join it as a Grand Prix winner is a question perhaps for 2015 but there are plenty of chances to break his duck in spectacular fashion this year. "I was always a massive fan of Stefan Everts as a kid. I loved world championship racing and always wanted to come over here. An Australian has never won a world title before. Jeff Leisk came very close but ran out of fuel and that cost him! It is a big incentive for me. What I am doing now is just one step and there are a lot of good riders over here. It will be tough but I will put in the hard yards and I have a good team behind me."

T HE POTENTIAL OF THE HUSKY?

In the first year of its rejuvenation Husqvarna leans heavily on 'orange'. The look and shape of the 350/450 is different to their close KTM cousins but the platform is solid across the brands, companies and race teams. The main differences? The 450 runs a different gearbox and offers five shifts compared to the KTM's four. It is also loses a fraction in power due to a different intake (the Husky has a polyamide rear sub-frame). The chassis carries a lower rear shock (termed 'U.S. style' with 317mm travel against the Austrian's 330) and there is a map selector switch on the handlebar as a standard feature.

Therefore it is not a stretch of the imagination to assume that the bikes – in MX2 as well where KTM have ruled every season since Rattray in 2008 – will be competitive from the first practice session under the desert night sky. "The Husqvarna is its own bike but, as you know, it is based on KTM technology so it is already on a top level," affirms Pyrhonen.

"There is not such a big difference at the moment. We were able to do good autumn testing after the Motocross of Nations with three different sessions and the riders were able to find their basic set-up. Straightaway we started on a good platform. In my opinion - what gives us a big advantage - is the fact that we also have a 350. It is a really awesome bike and it is great that we can provide that factory option to fast riders that might be coming from the MX2 class."

Rattray is also unequivocal about his choice of the 350 for his first campaign in the blue ribbon division. "They have this new programme going and we have been doing a lot of testing. I think the 350 is fantastic for the GP tracks that are not so fast and way more technical. The team has been great and it is run very profes-

sionally. Antti does a good job and we obviously have the backing of the factory in Austria. To be competitive you need to be on factory equipment and this was the best chance I had to come over and be on the type of technology that has done great for the last five years."



"It is obvious that at the beginning it will start off being more like a KTM compared to later down the road because we know what we know," KTM Motorsport Director Pit Beirer – ultimately head of the Husqvarna sport department also – said last summer. "If we know that this drive train works well then we will not create a different one just to be away from KTM; the identity needs to develop over the years."

"There is definitely a second road for us there," he adds. "We are not obliged that everything will be the same and just 'copied over'. We'll start from zero, let's say, and we need to create a different line and we'll use the synergies where we can. The R&D department head is the same and racing will be the same. For sure you will see a lot of similar steps that you would expect from us."

Ominous news for Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Suzuki, TM and even the established KTM champions as the new 'knights in white' could be leading a fresh charge across the same old battle turf.



HUSQVARNA

AT A DROP

-The motorcycling division was born in 1903 and the first (Belgian-made) engine produced was able to output a staggering 3mph. The first 100% Husky was a 500 v-twin made in 1919.

-The forefather of racing prowess was a technician called Folke Mannerstedt and his arrival in 1929 led to increased performance potential on the two-stroke technology and road racing success. They won the Swedish Grand Prix and even at the TT.

-The Silverpilen (1955-65) and Drombagen ('52-'59) motorcycles were the eye-catchers of the post-war period and when Husqvarna went on a run in motocross, enduro and supermoto that eventually led to 82 world championships across the disciplines

-The company has been based in Varese since the late 1980s and the 86/87 takeover. After ten years in Italian hands it was bought by BMW in 2007

-The Pierer Group purchase in 2013 brought the Husqvarna and Husaberg brands together after the latter was an initial breakaway movement from the 1987 deal by Cagiva's Claudio Castiglioni. Husaberg enjoyed a purple patch with three 500cc motocross titles with Joel Smets in the mid-1990s but the Husqvarna 'story' is now again complete.

-Some of the renowned world champions and winners include Bill Nilsson, Rolf Tibblin, Bent Aberg, Torsten Hallman, Heikki Mikkola, Hakan Carlquist, Jacky Martens and Alessio Chiodi

-Movie icon Steve McQueen was famously pictured riding a 400 Husky topless on a 1971 Sports Illustrated cover



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SCOTT

THE BIG IF...

By Adam Wheeler

One of the reasons why the Husqvarna MXGP effort feature prominently in this issue is the sense of mystery around the two riders that the IceOne team will bring to the FIM Motocross World Championship.

It is just over a month before the season gets underway but the camps for the upper elite of the new MXGP category are largely the same as they were last year: Cairoli-KTM, Paulin-Kawasaki, Desalle-Suzuki, Bobryshev/Nagl-Honda, Searle-Kawasaki even David Philippaerts has returned to a Yamaha.

Therefore throwing a rider with Tyla Rattray's status (an athlete returning from the hotbed of the AMA no less) and the Aussie pedigree surrounding Todd Waters into the mix is arguably one of the more fascinating elements of the fixtures in Qatar and Thailand.

There are other questions but in truth not many with any heavy significance. We know Cairoli's long-game strategy and approach to the championship openers while Paulin will have enough experience now in his third term in the premier class to also see the bigger picture. Clement Desalle is unlikely to be 100% race fit/confident and the same could apply to countrymen Ken De Dycker and Kevin Strijbos as the Belgian

clique are all on the clock after injury repercussions. It will be interesting to see if the factory Hondas can become potent start-gate missiles like they were in 2011. For me the three Brits (the 2013 Motocross of Nations team) Tommy Searle, Shaun Simpson and Jake Nicholls will also have their own stories to begin and progress for us to chart. Will Searle be smarter and happier on the Pro Circuit-less CLS Kawasaki? Will Simpson have some of that KTM magic from his 2008 breakthrough year with Roger Magee's Irish set-up? What can Nicholls add to the MXGP pot as the sole rookie from MX2 for 2014 now that Dean Ferris is trying to get up to speed in Californian stadiums?

“Cairoli won MX1 for five years but the opening GP only once in that period...”

Back to the white bikes though and what is the anticipation for Rattray? I think he has too much experience, guile from his American years and physical conditioning – always one of his strengths – not to be a threat. With the Grand Prix motos dropping to thirty minutes and two laps this makes his readjustment back to inter-



national racing even more streamlined. A factory 350 in his hands means his transition from those 250s to the big bike class is again made easier.

I've heard some opinions that he will not even make the top ten in MXGP but I find this hard to digest. It would be an amazing sight if he took the Husqvarna to victory at Losail, and first round anomalies are not rare, just look at Anaheim 1 for the formbook to go a bit wonky with nerves and other jitters.

Tony Cairoli won the MX1 title for five years but he only claimed the opening GP once in that period.

For sure Rattray will not freeze in the Qatar night glare like a desert hare on one of those endless straight roads. Unlike his former competitors who are performing nocturnally in front of off-road racing's biggest crowds the South African would celebrate a first round bonanza with only TV cameras and tumbleweed for company in what is one of the strangest but also pleasantly novel Grands Prix on the list.

It might be a stretch too far in the initial thrusts of the 2014 world championship but if Cairoli falters then I'd bet sizeable money that the '28'

will be among the closest of pursuers to demote the Sicilian.

“It would be an amazing sight if Rattray won in Losail. First race anomalies are not rare...”

Rattray's fitness has always been key to his speed and durability and like his peers he will be trying to sustain it as long as possible over thirty-six outings. Personally I'm also keen to see the friendly and humble Waters shake up the establishment as well. MXGP lacks Americans but with the Husky duo there is an extra cosmopolitan flavour for a robustly eclectic launch to 2014.





FEATURE

ALONG FOR THE RIDE

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Dorna/www.motogp.com

**AT INSIDE LOOK AT HOW MotoGP™
TAKES US UP TO 200mph plus WITH THE
LIKES OF MARQUEZ, LORENZO & CO**

On the fifth floor of Dorna Sports' plush office building just outside of Barcelona a cramped but well organised workshop houses an element of MotoGP™ that nobody ever sees but everybody enjoys.

A group of less than ten technicians are busy evolving a form of technology that takes MotoGP™ vast 280 million (homes reached) audience to within centimetres of the remarkable athletes at the centre of the show. TV Production Department On-board Manager Gerard Navarro, an expert in place within the paddock since 2007, kindly gave OTOR some of his time to explain how onboard cameras are an exhilarating weapon of MotoGP's™ televised arsenal.



D

FEATURE





Always on the move and ready...

On-boards form part of the TV department and there are around seven people that take care of the systems, devices and technology that a bike can carry. There is another side that is in charge of all the data we send via the antenna. We basically look after the material that goes on the bike. We travel to the races and tests and are often working with our material in hotels, not just the circuits. We have to be very flexible and agile in terms of the demands of the job because we never know how many crashes there can be at a Grand Prix. There might be less or more than the previous year so we have to be prepared. We have to be able to fix, build or fabricate a completely new unit at any time.

Many cameras, many changes...

Depending on the type of equipment we are using we are typically mounting just over 100 cameras per race. Before 2008-2009 we were applying material that was not that expensive to construct but since we switched to HD it is much more complicated and now we are assembling and connecting more or less all of the units we have. If there is a crash then we will try to repair the camera. We have two types and every year there are new cameras and new systems. When you reach the end of a cycle of a particular set of technology then you start-over with a lower quantity of a fresh design or product. We then start developing aspects like the housing. It is not really a field where you can evolve products over three or four years; we are changing the material quite a lot.

Tight for space on the bike...

We have the problem that the space on a bike for cameras is pretty limited. Honda, Yamaha, Ducati or whoever...there is very little room.

So we have to keep evolving our kit but cannot over-estimate the gaps we have. This is the big challenge. We want to improve performance but not the size or volume of the device. We also have to keep an eye on the weight of the battery and with every evolution the weight has to be the same or less and the capacity has to be bigger; the more cameras you attach to a bike and more GPS systems you are using then the drain is bigger and everything has to last at least the duration of a race.

We're watching...

There are three standard positions on a MotoGP™ bike and one that can be varied depending on the requirements. It can be reversed to look at the helmet, brake, throttle, foot. Every bike is different and that means the method of attaching the cameras also varies. We provide a handbook explaining the weights, designs and elements of the cameras to the teams. So the engineers are aware of the ramifications of the additions to the bikes at the races and in turn our technicians can have everything prepped and ready for the mounting process according to the different bikes. Before each race we have a meeting and confirm the allotment of the cameras per rider. Normally the top four or five racers in the standings are prepped with the full set-up and then depending on the grand prix then a local favourite or home rider might also be selected. Other examples are world champions in a new category at the first race of the next season. It is a lot of work to then install all the cameras and also because we have to adhere to the timetables of the teams. We cannot enter the pit box and want to fix a camera when they are building a clutch or something else and this is especially true when there has been a crash; we just have to wait.



Seeing a lot but also nothing...

There is a whole trust issue involved. Our mechanics are touching factory bikes and confidential technology...and then going to the pit next door to work on a different machine, maybe that of their sworn enemy! It is a unique position. I can see everything but I do not take in anything...and don't want to! I like the bikes and the technology but I do not ask any questions. When I started in the job there was obviously a bit of suspicion, simply because I wasn't known and was part of a team of three-four technicians in charge of a large quantity of cameras to work with in just one day. We would work on Thursdays – because that is the best time to have the bikes at our disposal – and across Friday, Saturday and Sunday we'd do maintenance and make small changes. Through the sheer amount of systems, and between four people, it can be a quite complicated job. Another example is if the bikes change configuration during the season or a modification is made and you arrive to the pit

to see that the way to install that camera for that particular bike has altered. If we had two days to mount the cameras at a GP this would be easier and in fact we have a smoother system now because we use the pre-season tests to get everything synced for the first GP. The tests are really useful. We have done some of our own testing with a supermoto bike around a local track but not too much because there is not much correlation with using the same material for three days in forty degree heat in Sepang. That's why we keep developing new pieces throughout the racing season.

Remembering Estoril 2008 and the Stoner incident [the camera dislodged and the then-Ducati rider had to keep on securing the device during the race]...

The Stoner case in Portugal was a particularly unfortunate affair. The camera system boxes were located in the front area of the bike: the transmitter and the databoard on one side



and the battery in the other. Due to a fairing change the room behind the fairing was reduced. In between warm-up and the race there was confusion between our mechanic and Ducati's mechanic and then the whole sorry episode began. The items should have been split and the boxes brackets were not renewed. It was a very difficult moment because it was dangerous. Our mechanic was fired directly. We mount almost 100 cameras with all the batteries and we have to be super-sure that they are secure and there will not be a problem because if one piece comes loose at 300kmph...

Testing, testing and the technological march...

We have a hand-held device that allows us to make a test to see if everything is connected and working properly but we were without this unit for a year and a half because our equipment is so specialised and built to specifications for this exact purpose that it was not

easy to create. It is not stuff you can find on the market. During that time we had to chat on the radio with the controller in the TV compound to make the check. Normally with our equipment - the way it tends to work - is that when we have everything on a decent and efficient level then there is another step in technology and we have to start from zero, whether it be 4K cameras or 3D, for example. Then we go through the period of prototypes, testing and development again.

Not so many peers to compare to...

There are many sports that use on-boards but motorcycle racing is quite special. There are not many references or points of comparison. We saw what they were using before in Superbike and there was a difference in quality; it comes down to the level of investment. I think there is more common ground between sports like NASCAR or Indycar or cars generally but for bikes there is not much.



On the world going 'onboard'...

I don't think our work has much to do with a person sticking a GoPro – and I pick this camera even though there are now quite a few to choose from – on their helmet. The big difference is the live transmission and the standard of those pictures for broadcast TV. The personal cameras seem to be good quality but there is hardly a comparison and until that equipment can serve a purpose for a live programme then they don't really enter our field. I think it would need a big investment to do that on a high level.

Feelings on the work done and still to do...

I'm satisfied and proud with what we have done since 2007 because there is no priority to be at the peak of engineering or fabricating enterprise, however for the needs of efficiency, speed and practicality we have to be very complicit in design and progression. We do everything ourselves except for the actual electronics of the cameras, electronics of the central Bluetooth brain on the bike and the video transmission. We've become fast and the manufacturers respect us for this. Other sports have come to see and ask about our work. It has involved a big push because we were not contracted to design but supervise and evalu-

ate the installation systems and from there it has moved on greatly. There isn't a specific race that stands out for me as one particular highlight but I remember at Laguna Seca when the gyroscopic rear camera was used for the first time...that was the launch for that particular idea and a camera we developed here and it worked really well.

Could we one day see a camera on a rider?

It is not impossible. Firstly it depends on his or her feeling about it and secondly on the safety aspect. We have made tests, not with cameras, but with biometric systems and in truth anything on a rider is complex. They themselves have to be focused on the race, so there is that whole 'distraction' issue and anything on the helmets interfere with homologation. There are also a lot of riders with several helmets being used through any one meeting. The electronics are still not at the point where we can explore too many more options. The camera needs to be very responsive with a good sensor and then with capabilities for a decent picture. It is not only about the lens. Every year new possibilities arise. We are thinking of a launch this year that will be pretty special but it will not involve anything to do with the rider. I hope it will be very spectacular.



CHEQUEBOOKS AT THE READY...

By Gavin Emmett

With the testing ban still to be lifted and only the odd team presentation to keep them busy, the fingers of MotoGP journalists have clearly got a touch restless over the past couple of weeks.

Two of the biggest rumours to have caught the eye concern Ducati; the first being a suggestion that they will switch their 'Factory' team to an 'Open' entry this season, whilst the possibility has also been mooted that they could tempt Jorge Lorenzo away from Yamaha at the start of 2015.

Concerning the first part of the conundrum, which arrived from a usually reliable if bombastic source, it will be no surprise to anybody to see the factory duo of Andrea Dovizioso and new-boy Cal Crutchlow testing the 'Open' Desmosedici at forthcoming tests in Sepang. There are clear advantages to be gained from using the 24-litre fuel tanks allowed if the standard ECU software is employed, and the Italians were already set to enter Yonny Hernandez's as 'Open' as one half of the Pramac deal.

It would make sense to at least try the combination of full factory bike with standard ECU software. The FTR-Yamaha match-up proved quick at testing in Valencia, and there is no doubt that Dorna are looking to a standard ECU software

across MotoGP™ for the near future – despite the protestations of Honda. The championship organisers would be delighted at the move I'm sure.

“‘14 sees the top four riders in the championship come up for contract renewal...”

We also mustn't forget at this juncture the success that new Ducati boss Gigi Dall'Igna has enjoyed with Aprilia amongst the CRT bikes up to now, and with his input, it may well become a cunning tactic.

It would be a slight loss of face, but the pressure is on from sponsors Marlboro, who sources have told me have threatened to withdraw at the end of their current contract, which I understand ends in 2014. Going 'Open' is no done deal, but it certainly makes testing that much more intriguing as the side-by-side comparison of the bikes will decide on the future.

Whether this future involves Jorge Lorenzo is a completely different matter, after a Spanish radio station suggested the Mallorcan is being lined up to join Ducati in 2015.



It mustn't be forgotten that 2014 sees all the top four riders in the championship come up for contract renewal, and I'm sure that there will be serious negotiating already going on for 2015 before the season even gets under way. However I do think it is seriously premature to suggest that Lorenzo would agree to such a radical move so early.

“The only destination I could see Lorenzo heading is Honda; to form a super-team...”

Lorenzo may not be best buddies with Valentino Rossi, but I'm sure that the Italian has explained his relief at rejoining Yamaha after his disastrous two years with the red team. Rossi himself says he will be deciding his future within the first five or six races of the year, and others will be keeping a close eye on that spot at Yamaha – including Crutchlow whose Ducati contract is believed to have a release clause after year one.

The only destination I could see Lorenzo heading is Honda; if they wanted to form a super-team alongside Marquez they have the power to do so, and my understanding is that this almost happened a couple of years back.

As things stand, it seems to me that any negotiations from Lorenzo are to increase his value within Yamaha, or to engineer a move to be able to challenge Marquez on the same machinery.

Even before the start of the season, MotoGP 2014 already looks exciting!





SUPERDUKE



WHERE NEXT?

By Roland Brown

ROLAND BROWN MUSES ON THE
DIRECTIONS AND ROADS TAKEN
BY THE MOTORCYCLE INDUSTRY





It's strange just how obvious many motorcycling trends seem with the benefit of hindsight.

Take this year's explosion of interest in super-naked bikes such as the BMW S1000R, KTM 1290 Super Duke R and Ducati Monster 1200, for example. If you enjoy performance and light weight, and ride mainly on the road, a powerful, high-tech open-class sports bike with an upright riding position surely sounds like fun.

Logical, isn't it? At most roadgoing speeds, "naked" bikes with a bit of wind protection surely make more sense than clip-ons and full fairing, especially as you can ride them in jacket and jeans without feeling under-dressed.

Yet despite bikes such as the Aprilia Tuono, Kawasaki Z1000, Ducati Streetfighter and Honda CB1000R being around for a while, it's only recently that the class has burst into life. My only surprise is that it took so long, and that there aren't more firms following Yamaha's MT-09 with exciting middleweight alternatives to the Triumph Street Triple and MV Brutale triples.

Big adventure bikes are another group whose rise now seems totally predictable. Riders are getting older; exotic holidays are popular; the world's a smaller place. Who wouldn't want a rugged, comfortable bike that could double as regular weekday transport and occasional passport to an exciting adventure off the beaten track? As usual, it's clear in hindsight. Presumably it was less so five or more years ago, especially to Suzuki as they let the old V-Strom 1000 die without a replacement.

Conversely it seems strange that so few people saw the collapse of the sports bike market. After all, those same ageing riders were encountering ever stricter policing and increasingly negative public attitudes to speed, while the fastest bikes' speed invited a jail sentence — before getting out of third gear. At least we still have the BMW S1000RR, Ducati Panigale and others, even if they can't always make much sense as road bikes to their owners, let alone to a non-motorcyclist.

When you go back further the two-wheeled trends tend to be driven by logical desires. Fairings arrived in the late Seventies and early Eighties, for example, as more bikes got fast enough to benefit from them. The success of bikes like Suzuki's Bandits in the Eighties showed the widespread desire for simple, inexpensive machines with adequate performance. In the Nineties, Ducati's 916 and Monster V-twins offered a more interesting alternative to fours, and led even some Japanese firms to follow their example.

Of course discussing those trends after they've happened is the easy bit. What would be infinitely more useful (and profitable) would be the ability to transport yourself ten years into the future, and then look back and see what was about to happen. That's the game that all the manufacturers' product planners are playing, as they try to guess which direction to take with new bikes that require several years of expensive development before reaching the market.

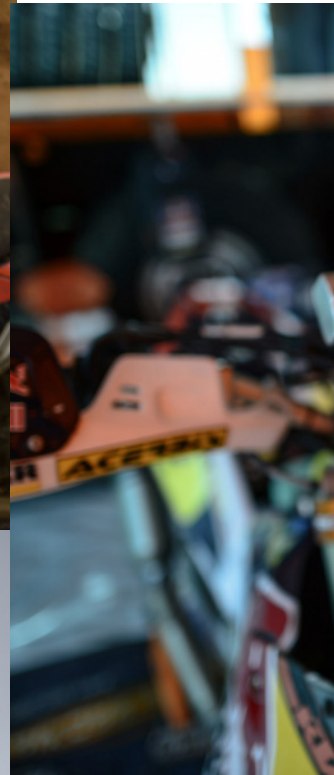
All the firms hold their cards very close to their chests, but some thinking becomes clear over time. Honda, for example, have a very cautious view, assuming that ageing riders will get slower and more keen on fuel economy than speed; hence the firm's decision to put resources into the NC700 family rather than the Fireblade or CBR600RR. And that younger riders are mostly concerned with reasonable performance at the lowest possible price (as they always have been), hence the CB500s.

BMW have a more upbeat projection, based on at least some motorcyclists being keen to spend money on performance and technology, whether it's on freshly liquid-cooled adventure bikes, giant six-cylinder tourers or 160bhp semi-naked missiles. Perhaps their latest Big Thing is the potential for customisation that is built into the new R nineT — and which is shared by Yamaha's XV950 and other Sport Heritage models. Expect to see more from other manufacturers in future, especially if those bikes sell well.

What's the next big trend, that's the multi-million dollar question? If I really knew that (or could convince someone that I did) I'd be charging consultants' fees for my thoughts rather than giving them away here, but it takes little imagination to see clever electronics and customisation spreading to other classes. How about blending the S1000R, K1600 and nineT to make a roadster with semi-active suspension and a quickly detachable half-fairing, plus removable rear subframe giving a choice of lightweight solo seat or comfortable dual-seat with integrated panniers? Hopefully BMW are working on it already...







CATALAN

POWER



Photos by Maragni/KTM, HRC, Yamaha Racing, DPPI

What is in the water in Catalunya? All three MotoGP champions, almost a decade of dominance in Trial thanks to Toni Bou and now a clean sweep of the toughest rally on the planet. Marc Coma fronted the 2014 Dakar from the fifth stage, taking top three finishes in ten of the thirteen. The Red Bull KTM rider secured his fourth victory in the competition after missing the 2013 edition through a shoulder injury. One of his countrymen, Jordi Viladoms, also on the new KTM 450 Rally, was second while another Catalan, former motorcyclist and 2004 winner, Nani Roma, owned the car division in a Monster Energy Mini All4 Racing.

Despite heavy and very real threats from Honda and Yamaha in 2014 it was KTM that stood atop the podium for the thirteenth time. Almost 9000km were travelled through the two weeks since the very first days of the year. Coma won by virtually two hours after main rivals Joan Barreda and Cyril Despres suffered setbacks that meant they were always playing catch-up to the 37 year who also won in 2006, 2009 and 2011. Less than half the 196 motorcycle starters in the rally made it to the finish in Valparaiso for the 36th Dakar that traversed Argentina, Bolivia and Chile.







SCOTT

Some superb pics of Honda's factory rally racer Joan Barreda who grasped the most wins at the 2014 Dakar with five stage victories and was within one stage of the runner-up position overall (eventually taking seventh).

The 30 year old was using some of Scott Sport's toughest and best off-road garments; a range that includes 450 motocross items, especially the Fission jersey and riding pants, and Hustle and Recoil XI Pro Sand goggles. Hard to imagine the Spaniard going two weeks in a set of gear that doesn't stand up to the punishment of the climate and the kilometres in South America. Dual Raid Jacket and Pants, shown here, would also be welcome in those kinds of conditions while the sheer quantity of hours and length of time holding on to the works CRF450 handlebars is the best testimony for those 450 Fission gloves. For more info:

www.scott-sports.com







PRODUCTS



ALPINESTARS

Continuing the Dakar theme Alpinestars published some information on their Racer motocross apparel especially with Marc Coma wearing the saddle of his 450 Rally smooth with the pants (shown here and available for just under 100 euros). The item has lower waist stretch panels and pre-curved leg design: "Alpinestars' Racer Pants offer comfort and enhanced performance in the riding position." The gloves also have a pre-curved design and silicone grips. The three tags for the Racer line seem to be 'light', 'airy' and 'fitted'. We personally prefer the look of the Techstar range but Racer has younger, more dynamic styling.

www.alpinestars.com



PUMA

OTOR was lucky enough to be sent a pair of Puma's Desmo boots before Christmas and it is without hesitation that we can claim the performance footwear to be some of the most comfortable we've tried. As with most motorcycle boots these days there is a brace of impact protection features and reinforcements to not only ensure a decent level of resilience in the product but also (hopefully) longevity. There is an internal nylon ankle bone protector plus heel counter, shin plate, breathable fabric lining and a water resistant zipper system. The rubber gear change strip is a cool touch. Overall the combination of materials creates a very soft and flexible set of footwear that gives the sensation of protection but thin enough to provide great feel. You barely notice you have them on. We'll have to see how they last over time but combined with that cool design (we have the blue ones) it is a very worthy purchase. For those needing new boots right now for the end of winter and into spring then there is also a Goretex version.

www.puma-moto.com







BACKPAGE

Monster Energy Girls
By Simon Cudby







'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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